

BUILDING UP A BUSINESS.

THE average merchant is apt to look upon any expenditure which does not at once show returns as an outlay which will stand the closest and most economical figuring before being authorized. We know dozens of instances where the temptation to save \$50 or \$100 in repairs, fixtures, lights, etc., often blinds good business judgment.

If running a store were a matter of one or two years, with a closing out at the end of that time, it might be good policy, says The Dry Goods Economist, to squeeze the last dollar out of the business by refusing to incur an expense that was not absolutely necessary. Fortunately, most merchants are in business to stay, but even so, their sentiments in regard to expenses do not vary much from those just mentioned.

An instance comes to mind wherein the folly of this belief is forcibly illustrated. The bulk of the dry goods trade in a certain city had always been monopolized by one house, which prospered and grew rich; the proprietors naturally assumed that it was because every advantage was to be obtained by trading at their store. The true reason, however, was the fact that there was no other establishment in town that had attained sufficient prominence to make fair competition possible.

A few years ago a new-comer appeared on the scene and erected a modern building with every approved appliance for doing business. Bright salespeople, light, fresh air, good service, good goods and elegant window displays soon brought trade. It came slowly the first year, the second year was much better and the third showed a large balance on the right side.

The old established house kept on in its old way and the new competition was ridiculed. Things have changed now, and that competition is feared, and with good reason. No merchant has a mortgage on the trade of his community, and nowadays people know what good storekeeping is, and if they have endured the old-fashioned ways of some establishments, it was because it couldn't be helped.

The wonderful influence of the mail-order business of large metropolitan stores on the trade in the smaller cities is to a considerable degree directly traceable to the poor storekeeping at home. Judicious expenditures for light window decorations, advertising, cash earners, good fixtures, comfortable chairs, intelligent help, and all the other necessities of an up-to-date business are forced upon the merchant of to-day, if he wishes to keep pace with his enterprising competitor.

Competition is most effective when it is allowed its own way, and the only way to meet it successfully is by adopting up-to-date measures for attracting the masses. The American shopping public is fastidious, it goes where comfort, cleanliness and intelligence are parts of the store service.

Cutting prices or continual sacrifice sales never yet made a substantial business or won profit in the end. A store wins trade because of its facilities for supplying that trade. Many stores that are stagnant to-day, after past years of prosperity, owe their present condition to that new competition of which the public are getting a better knowledge every day.

The demand for fur trimmings is still good. The new browns, fawns and drabs, also black fur and feather trimmings, are shown by Brophy, Cains & Co.

PRINCES USEFUL IN TRADE.

Mr. Thomas Wardle, the president of the Silk Association of Great Britain and Ireland, has written to The Times, with the sanction of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, to make known the fact that His Royal Highness has made a selection of white, black and colored silks of British manufacture for the purpose of making into waistcoats. It will be remembered that at a meeting of the council of the association held last year at Stafford House, Sir George Birdwood, one of the vice-presidents, suggested that the time had arrived when an effort might rationally be made to free gentlemen's evening dress from its present sombre and water-like appearance, and he proposed a resolution, which was unanimously passed, that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales should be asked to give his sanction to, and approval of, such a movement, by initiating the wearing of figured and colored silk waistcoats for evening dress. This having been done, some special materials were manufactured, and, as stated above, selections have been made, not only by the Prince of Wales, but by a number of gentlemen who intend henceforth to adopt white, black and parti-colored waistcoats both for morning and evening use.

QUALITATIVE TESTS FOR TEXTILE FIBRES.

1. Microscopic appearance.
2. Cotton burns without smell, while wool and silk shrivel up and give off odor of burning animal matter.
3. A boiling solution of caustic alkali dissolves silk and wool, but has little action on cotton.
4. Concentrated sulphuric acid dissolves cotton and silk in the cold, while wool is little affected.
5. Schwertzer's reagent (ammoniacal solution of oxide of copper) dissolves cotton and silk, but not wool. Cellulose is reprecipitated by gum, sugar or acids, but the silk substance by acids alone.
6. A solution of basic chloride of zinc dissolves silk, but not cotton or wool.
7. A solution of cotton in concentrated sulphuric acid gives a purple coloration with an alcoholic solution of alpha-naphthol. This reaction really indicates the presence of sugar, and is therefore not given by silk or wool.
8. Million's reagent (mercurous-mercuric nitrate) gives a red color with silk or wool, but not with cotton.
9. Wool (also hair and fur) is blackened by heating with a dilute solution of plumbite of soda, which is prepared by dissolving litharge in caustic soda. Silk and cotton, as they do not contain sulphur, are unaffected in color.
10. Nitric acid colors wool and silk yellow, but does not affect cotton.
11. An acid solution of indigo extract dyes wool and silk, but not cotton.—Exchange.

AN ORDER FOR OVERCOATS.

The Militia Department has placed an order for 2,000 great coats with Shorey, of Montreal. The contractor has undertaken to waterproof this supply with the Rigby process as an experiment, and if the coats prove serviceable, it is likely both coats and trousers will be waterproofed thereafter.